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REPORT

50X1-HUM

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR; Leningrad

DATE OF
INFORMATION 1950SUBJECT Economic; Technological - Heavy machine
building

DATE DIST. 23 Aug 1950

HOW
PUBLISHED Daily newspaperWHERE
PUBLISHED Leningrad

NO. OF PAGES 5

DATE
PUBLISHED 19 Mar - 30 May 1950SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

LANGUAGE Russian

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SOURCE Leningradskaya Pravda.

RED TAPE, BAD MANAGEMENT
PLAGUE COMBINE RECONSTRUCTION

Leningradskaya Pravda, No 67, 19 Mar 50

Basic reconstruction of the Metallokombinat (Metals Combine) was begun last fall. The plan calls for enlarging the rolling and galvanizing shops, building new furnaces, installing additional equipment, and changing the entire technology of roofing-tin production. The aim of this program is to render the Metallokombinat capable of supplying Leningrad roofing-tin needs, freeing the city from the necessity of importing that commodity from the Urals.

Unfortunately, the plan is not being translated into action, and consumers are complaining about the poor quality of the Metallokombinat products.

A heavy, complex reduction unit for the sheet-rolling mill was ordered from the Plant imeni Stalin. It was found that certain corrections had to be made in the blueprints submitted by the Metallokombinat, but this was not done, although it would have been an easy matter for the capable design office of the Plant imeni Stalin. The scheduled delivery date has passed, but the reduction unit has not appeared.

An order placed with the Lift and Transport Plant imeni Kirov for two badly needed electric bridge cranes brought the cool reply from the management that it could supply only one crane, as it had not placed the necessary orders for material with which to build the second one.

The Metallokombinat set up an experimental plate-straightening machine, built at the Plant imeni Karl Marks. It proved unsatisfactory, however, and soon got out of order. The management requested that some changes be made in the machine, and that two new machines of improved design be built. The Plant imeni Karl Marks merely took back the defective parts of the experimental model and did nothing more.

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A large share of the blame for the present situation falls on Chief Engineer Kazakov and the Metallokombinat directors. They are neither fulfilling their own plans, nor insisting on punctual fulfillment of the obligations of contracting plants.

So far, the Metallokombinat has not submitted plans for the two doublers needed for the rolling mill; these doublers should have been ready at the end of last year.

The enterprise is not yet utilizing its tempering furnaces.

The Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet has failed to insure a supply of metal structures and power tools to the builders, and has not yet ordered the construction of access roads and the laying of sewage lines in the Metallokombinat area. Instead of rendering practical help, the Executive Committee is busy drawing up a new reconstruction plan, which will provide longer terms for the fulfillment of the various projects.

It is time for the Executive Committee to proceed from words to deeds.

Leningradskaya Pravda, No 71, 24 Mar 50

The foundation for the plate-straightening machine ordered from the Plant imeni Karl Marks is ready at the Metallokombinat, but assembly cannot begin, as 17 working rollers are still lacking. These parts, over 2 meters long each, were ordered by the Plant imeni Karl Marks from the Kirov Plant several months ago. On 15 March the Kirov Plant management declared that the rollers could not be made because it did not have grinding and chrome-plating machines necessary for their manufacture; later they flatly stated that the plans could not be complied with.

These are empty excuses, for the Kirov Plant made the same kind of rollers for the experimental plate-straightening machine which the Plant imeni Karl Marks built for the Metallokombinat. It behooves the director of the Kirov Plant, Abroskin, to see the importance of these rollers to the Metallokombinat. Unless they are made within the next few days, the plate-straightening machine will not be ready by the target date, 1 April.

Back in the fourth quarter of 1949, the Elektrosila Plant was to have built the main electric motor for the Metallokombinat rolling mill, as well as several motors for the galvanizing shop. These motors have been built, though a little late; but instead of sending them to the Metallokombinat, Director Shevchenko has kept them in stock, while correspondence requesting orders and funds is carried on.

A 15-meter roller conveyer, needed for feeding sheet billets to the cutter, is scheduled for delivery from the Plant imeni Yegorev during this quarter. That plant, however, is wrangling with the Metallokombinat over who shall provide plans, and in the meantime, it is not being built.

The Krasnyy Metallist Plant has not yet begun work on six conveyers ordered by the Metallokombinat.

The Plant imeni Sverdlov has not delivered five cutters for trimming roofing tin, though the plan called for their delivery some time ago.

The complacency of Director Yurkov of the Local-Industry Section of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet is astonishing. The Metallokombinat reconstruction should be of primary interest to him, but

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he has not lifted a finger to hurry up the lagging suppliers. Instead of close supervision, there are telephone conversations. Up to now, not a single new machine has been installed in the shops of the Metallokombinat.

For its part, the management of the Metallokombinat has either failed to make contracts on time, or to provide the contracting plants with plans.

Leningradskaya Pravda, No 74, 28 Mar 50

The Nevskiy Plant imeni Lenin has not yet begun work on the doublers which the Metallokombinat has ordered for its rolling mill. The first plans submitted by the Metallokombinat were returned with the comment that they were unsatisfactory and would have to be changed. This was done in spite of the fact that there are many capable designers at the Nevskiy Plant imeni Lenin who could have made the necessary changes in the plans themselves.

At length, however, the Metallokombinat submitted new plans, backed up by a telegram from a Urals plant stating that doublers of this design worked satisfactorily. The director, Moykin, was not satisfied, however. Still trying to evade the order, he says, "We will study the plans, and then decide what to do."

Moykin should realize the importance of the order, get to work on the doublers, and make up for lost time.

Not the slightest improvement has been noted at the Metallokombinat construction area. Work is not properly planned. While 160 workers are occupied on a job during the day, only 50 are put on the night shift. On several days five brigades were half an hour late to work; three brigades recently reported for work one hour and 10 minutes late.

The pit is being dug and the foundation laid for the annex which will house the rolling mill; the foundation is being laid for the ingot-heating furnace, and excavation is going on at the location of the stack and flue for the furnace.

A new chamber annealing furnace has been set up in one of the shops. Utilization of it will greatly increase the output of first-class roofing tin. It cannot be put into operation, however, until it is equipped with a regenerator for heating air, and a 9-meter stack. This task was assigned to a trust of the Construction Administration of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet. Beyond making promises, the directors of this trust have done nothing.

Following the appearance of certain remarks in the press, Trofimov, chief engineer of the Construction Administration, visited the Metallokombinat construction operations. He conferred with the director of the construction workers, Korotkevich, who asked him to do the following: send a works superintendent, two foremen, and skilled workers, especially bricklayers and carpenters, to the site; arrange for transportation of labor to the site; speed steps toward installation of the regenerator and the construction of the stack for the annealing furnace.

Trofimov listened attentively to these requests, made unlimited promises, and left. Results of his visit have not yet been observed.

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If the directors of the Construction Administration really want to help the construction workers, they should send a qualified engineer to the scene.

Leningradskaya Pravda, No 110, 10 May 50

Great improvements have been made in the Metallokombinat reconstruction operations. Where there was recently a bare expanse, the 5-meter metal columns and connecting girders of the new rolling-mill shop are going up, and bricklayers will soon start on the walls. Work on the rolling mill itself, which is being built by one of the Leningrad enterprises, is going according to plan, and the manufacturers promise delivery on time. The main electric motor, made at the Elektrosila Plant, has been delivered.

Complacency is not justified at this point however, as there is still much work ahead. The galvanizing machine has not yet been put into operation, as the Kirov Plant has held up the delivery of a number of parts needed for it, and the Metallokombinat workers have not completed the assembly of the ventilation system. There are still difficulties with the rolling-mill reduction unit, an order at the Plant imeni Stalin.

The sudden apprehension voiced by Yurkov and Demidov, directors of the Local Industry Section of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet, concerning the timely completion of the reduction unit, comes a little late. According to the plan, it was to have been completed in the fourth quarter of last year.

The Metallokombinat has twice submitted plans for the unit. These plans, however, prepared under Director Sapryn, of the Design Bureau of the Local Industry Section, were virtually incoherent, reflecting the carelessness and technical ignorance of the workers of the Design Bureau. In spite of this, Kazakov, chief engineer of the Metallokombinat, blandly forwarded them to the Plant imeni Stalin.

Although Kozharinov, director of the Plant imeni Stalin, knew the specified completion date for the reduction unit, and the importance of its delivery to the Metallokombinat, he did not declare formal dissatisfaction with the progress of the task. Only after the delivery date had passed did Kozharinov do what he should have done at first. He called in his most highly qualified designer to look over the plans and remedy their defects. This work was carried out under the direct supervision of the chief hydro-turbine designer, Kovalev.

The plant is now making metal structures and patterns for pig iron and steel castings, and has ordered seven heavy rollers and belts from a plant in the Urals.

At first glance it would appear that the directors of the plant imeni Stalin had decided to compensate for lost time, and had zealously betaken themselves to the fulfillment of the order. During April, there were many indications that the plan was being closely adhered to. However, the question of the 30-ton casting for the housing of the reduction unit is an uncertain one.

The attempt to get help from the Kirov Plant did not meet with success. Firsov, the production director of that plant, arrived on the scene with his red tape, so familiar to Leningrad residents in connection with the Metallokombinat order for working rollers. And now, with his characteristic evasiveness, Firsov has come up with "technical reasons" for the inability of the giant plant to make the required casting.

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Undoubtedly, the reduction unit should be made more quickly than is estimated at the Plant imeni Stalin. But to perform the task, proven methods of socialist competition, and closer checking on fulfillment of orders will have to be set up. It is significant that not a word about the Metallokombinat order has appeared in the plant newspaper, Stalinets.

Leningradskaya Pravda, No 126, 30 May 50

Every day, 450 workers of various building trades are turning out to work on the reconstruction of the Metallokombinat. Metal structural work is nearing completion. Bricks are being laid on the second story of the workers' building, which houses the dining room, showers, and other facilities. A roadbed is being constructed for the spur line which will link the Metallokombinat with the October Railroad System. Work is going slowly, however, and inadequate technical supervision permits the frequent occurrence of serious mistakes.

On 28 April the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet changed the reconstruction plan, setting 1 September as the completion date. The reasoning behind this change is expressed by Sorokin, deputy chairman of the Executive Committee, who never objected to departures from the old plan, considering it unrealistic. "Wait a while," he would say. "We will think over the plan, and set new, more realistic time limits."

Unfortunately, the directors of the Construction Administration of the Executive Committee of the Leningrad City Soviet, and of Trust No 2, which is working with the Executive Committee, seem to regard the new plan as no more binding than the old one. After one month, it is apparent that the change has not been for the better. The fitting out of the workers' building is $1\frac{1}{2}$ weeks behind schedule. Foundations for the metal columns to be erected in the construction of the heat-treatment shop, scheduled for arrival at the end of April, have not yet arrived, as some of them had to be broken and rebuilt. Similar instances of carelessness and irresponsibility can be cited.

"I doubt that we will finish our work by 1 September," writes Kurepin, director of the Construction-Assembly Administration of Trust No 2.

As for the contracting suppliers, the Kirov Plant has at last met its obligations and delivered parts enabling workers to complete the assembly of the plate-straightening machine. When this machine is operating, it will produce plate free from "waves," and improve the quality of the plate in general.

There is still justifiable dissatisfaction with the way the manufacture of the rolling-mill reduction unit is proceeding at the Plant imeni Stalin. According to the plan approved by Director Kozharinov, the unit is to be assembled, tested, and delivered by 1 July. But heavy forgings for it, expected during May from a plant in the Urals, have not arrived. Also expected in May was the 30-ton housing for the unit. The order for casting this unit has been given the Ruskii Dizel Plant. The directors of that plant, however, flatly refuse to fulfill the order.

The assembly of the new galvanizing machine has begun at Metallokombinat. When operating, it should double the output of high-quality galvanized roofing tin.

Metallokombinat is to be working at full capacity by 1 September. It is the duty of builders, assemblers, and supplying plants to attain this end.

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